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duct. Till lately he was required to perform most of those duties which have been imposed on the chaplain since he became a resident officer. The salary of the master has hitherto been thirty-five guineas a-year, with an allowance that made his appointment near one hundred pounds, exclusive of coals and candles; but it is now intended to augment his salary to one hundred pounds, and to withhold the former allowances. The salary of the usher is twenty pounds, with allowances that may be valued at near fifty pounds. His duty is also confined to the instruction and care of the boys. Both master and usher reside in the house. The housekeeper has twelve pounds per annum, and allowances worth near forty pounds per annum; and the under-servants' wages are five pounds ten shillings each, with diet and lodging.

The officers who receive no salaries are, the president, vice-president, treasurer, and two secretaries. The duty of the secretaries is to superintend the conduct of the register in the execution of his office, and to approve of the apprenticing of the boys, and accepting their indentures. This last, therefore, is the only employment of the secretaries, if the register does his duty, which includes in it (as described in the bye-laws) most of what usually belongs to the office of secretary in other institutions.

We have subjoined in the appendix an abstract of the income and expenditure of the society for the last twelve years, and other returns made to us by the register, of the number of boys admitted in that period, and how disposed of, their course of instruction, and other particulars of the establishment.

*Council Chamber, Dublin Castle, }
September 21, 1809.*

BELFAST MAG. NO. XXXI.

(Signed.)

ISAAC CORRY.	(L. S.)
GEO. HALL, Provost.	(L. S.)
JAS. VERSCHOYLE,	} (L. S.)
Dean of St. Patrick's.	
JAS. WHITELAW,	} (L. S.)
Vicar of St. Catherine's.	
WILLIAM DISNEY.	(L. S.)
RICH. L. EDGEWORTH.	(L. S.)

We have now given these reports as far as they have been published by order of the house of commons in the last session of parliament. The board continue their labours, and we understand they are now engaged in inquiry into schools which are supported by the donations or bequest of private individuals. When further reports are published, we shall endeavour to procure them for insertion in our pages.

To the Proprietors of the B.M.M.

ON THE NAMES OF THE MONTHS.

IN a note inserted in the 42th page of your 4th volume, numerical denominations for the months are strongly recommended—those now in use are objected to “as proceeding from an exploded superstition, or from an evident misnomer, as, in the case of the last four months,”—the late French appellations are applauded, “as making considerable approaches to propriety,” their former system is dignified with the name of a “reformed calendar, and their present rejection of it is attributed to caprice.”

In controverting assertions of this nature, little apology is necessary, even to the worthy member of your company who made them, as I know he is equally a friend to free discussion as the rest of your body, (having the honour of being acquainted with him,) and think that he wishes rather to determine the real truth, than to establish dogmas merely because they were once favoured by his approbation.

P

The inconvenience occasioned in the intercourse of mankind, by the great diversity of languages, was so sensibly felt in the earliest times, that it was then believed, (as is it still by many well informed people,) that the variation of languages was instituted as a curse by the supreme being to punish mankind for a singular instance of disobedience and presumption. There are few points of mutual intelligence which more frequently come into use in the intercourse of men than the determinations of time, and it has been a great convenience that those in use have hitherto been of such general import. The division of time into weeks, or portions of seven days, is nearly universal over the whole world, and can also be traced back to the most remote antiquity, and the names for the months are at least common over the greatest part of Europe, and America, and in all European settlements in the other parts of the world. By any change in the present denominations of time, these advantages would be evidently lost, and an increase given to that curse of Babel, the confusion of language; to which, if it would not lead too much from the points in consideration, I could trace the most serious evils of public wars, and bloodshed, to say nothing of private quarrels and murders.

But there are other grounds of objection, which more decidedly show the inadequacy and impropriety of numerical appellations for the months. To exhibit these in a strong point of view, it will perhaps be as good a method as any, to commence by asking those who uphold this plan, from what period would they begin to reckon the months? and which they would call first month? I suppose they would think this a strange question, as they

must imagine it to be so obvious that first month must mean January; that is to say, they have no doubt, but the new year should commence a few days after the winter solstice. Though the proper time for the commencement of the year has been the subject of much learned dispute, and one very different from the present was in use for the greatest portion of recorded time; yet I will here grant that the year should begin a few days after the winter solstice.—They will then of course, think, the numerical appellations beginning with January, first month, and ending with December, twelve-month, must be of as universal application as they are plain and simple; but in this they will find that they are extremely mistaken, some of them forget, and others do not know, that the winter solstice takes place at directly opposite periods at the southern and northern sides of the equator, and that when it is midwinter here, or the winter solstice, it is midsummer, or the summer solstice, at the cape of Good Hope, and the rest of the southern hemisphere; now if the above appellations were to be established, only conceive what confusion must ensue; the southerners calling that month seventh month, which the northerners called first month, and so on through the rest of the calendar. But it may be said, that the northerners being the most powerful should have the right of naming the months, from the period of the year they thought best, and that the southerners should yield to them so far as to begin their year, at midsummer, just after the summer solstice; but, if in reality the winter solstice is the best period to commence the year from, as my opponents believe, would it not be a palpable injustice to compel the southerners to begin their

year at their summer solstice; and might they not fairly retaliate if ever they had the power? as might be the case in the revolution of ages; and compel us to call July first month? Now as I have no doubt many worthy men here would prefer death rather than submit to this change, only think what grievous wars might ensue, for this cause, as there have already for others of much less consequence.

In giving names to the months, it is evident then that those of numeral origin are improper, for the reasons above stated. Four of the months at present bear the names of men of ancient renown, and some suppose that it would be best to give the others names of the same nature; but this would be objectionable both from the method not being universally applicable over the whole globe, and because we should, in all probability, be forced in this case to add fame to the memories of the enemies of the human race, who under the name of conquerors and heroes, have so often deluged the earth with blood. The names of the twelve signs of the zodiac seem not liable to any of these objections as designations for the months; but to this the procession of the equinoxes is an insuperable obstacle.

For these reasons it seems clear that arbitrary names, which denote the months in their annual order, without any other obvious meaning, are the best yet proposed, as being least exposed to the above defects. Those we at present use, are sufficiently of this nature to answer every purpose, and the slight degree in which they differ from it, is rather beneficial than otherwise. For though to men of letters and well informed people, the names now in use have all either numeral or historical allusions, yet the mass of mankind know nothing of this, and

use them merely to denote the months themselves; and even the better informed in the common use of those words, seldom think of the persons or facts to which the names allude. We use the names July and August, for example, in general, without bestowing a thought on Julius Cæsar, or Augustus, after whom they are called; many who know very well that septem and octo mean seven and eight, speak of September and October without thinking, or perhaps knowing the reason why September and October are named by these words. Most know that January, March, May, and June, are called after heathen gods, worshipped by the Greeks and Romans, (though that the latter name is of this sort admits of dispute); but the origin of the names February and April are still undetermined so as to remove doubts, notwithstanding much has been published respecting them.

Of the names then in use only three relate decidedly to exploded superstitions, "and as few but the learned know this, and as there can be no great danger of their worshipping Janus, Mars, or Maia, from this circumstance, the superstitious part of the objection can have no great weight, or danger, particularly since, as the author of the note owns, these superstitious are exploded." It is in truth from unexploded existing superstitions, that we are to apprehend mischief, not from exploded ones; and of this kind, for an enlightened civilized community, God knows we have a sufficient stock, to demand all the reforming hands, that like such work, and can be procured, to labour at their extirpation; and till this is done, we may well defer farther consideration of the exploded superstitions.

That the names of the four last months of the year are not "misnomers," as implied in the note, most

know who have read Kennet's Roman Antiquities, which is a common school book, and consequently understand that the Romans began their year a little before the vernal equinox, according to the common custom of mankind, previous to the christian æra, and that consequently September, October, and November and December, are no misnomers, being really, as they imply, the 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th months in the ancient Roman calendar; and the numeral part of them being all in the language of the old Romans, shows this directly, and can cause no confusion, but to the person who confounds this language with English; and the old Roman calendar with that we now use.

The assertions at the end of the note, are equally objectionable as those already mentioned;—The French calendar neither deserving the name of a reformed calendar, making considerable approaches to propriety, or their rejection of it again, being the effect of caprice.

In the first place, that which is worse than the original, cannot with propriety be called reformed, and it is easy to show that the names of the months in what is improperly called the French calendar, are still more defective than the numeral names, of which the inconvenience has been already proved; for the numeral names are suitable to one half the globe, though they will not answer for the other half, but the names taken from the Phenomena of Vegetation, are only proper to such parts of the same latitude as lie at nearly the same elevation, the seasons of the ripening of various fruits and plants differing materially even in the narrow range of our own small island: besides the invention of these names, if they deserve the name, did not originate with the French,

the Dutch having used them long before, as can be proved from the best authorities; and how giving the months new names, which could not be strictly proper even over the whole of France, and were quite absurd when used in other parts of the world, can "make considerable approaches to propriety," will I believe puzzle the most ingenious sophist to prove.

After what has been said, it requires little consideration, to acquit the French of acting from "caprice," in rejecting the new names for the months, and having recourse again to those which were in general use over the rest of Europe: and if to this any farther argument need be added, it will be found in the recollection that Napoleon, by whose direction this rejection took place, besides being a man of science himself, acted in this respect, with the advice of De La Lande, and other eminent astronomers and learned men, after due deliberation; and that the return to the old system was received with the greatest delight by the whole French people; a delight not arising from caprice, but from the serious inconvenience which they had found in their intercourse with the rest of the world, in using the new names for the months: and which indeed from their inadequacy, and the narrow circle of their application, give a just specimen of the hasty and superficial changes made by the French reformers, in the æra of the revolution, which may well be called that of folly and madness.

Before concluding, it may be satisfactory to some to state one reason more in favour of the present names for the months. While, as has been shown, they are to the mass of mankind, sufficiently free from other meanings than those to which they are applied, to be universally applicable over the whole globe

without inconvenience, to those who know the facts or persons in ancient history and mythology, to which those names allude, they form a valuable monument of grand historical facts, no less remarkable for the extent of their operation, and the continuance of their influence, which is not yet entirely exhausted, than for the surprising nature and origin of that prodigious power, under which they occurred; which was so far extended and lasted so long, and beneath which all the civilized world once bowed; in short, they form to them a remarkable monument of the history, the customs, the religion, and the great men of the Romans, more lasting than one of brass, or marble, which has continued many centuries unimpaired, and promises fairly to endure for ages to come. Those names then consecrated by their antiquity, having been proved by long trial adequate for the purposes to which they are applied, and being also capable of universal use, and rising conspicuous in comparison with other names and systems, which have either been imagined or partially used in a small extent; and any alteration in them having been shown to be likely to create confusion, and narrow the circle of intelligence, it is hoped that those who read this will be satisfied with the propriety of using them, or at least not be led away by unsupported assertions, to suppose that they are improper, or worthy of rejection.

It is not any wonder however that the class of men, who have been taught to use numeral names for the months from their infancy, (and who do not know the facts above stated, which prevent their universal use,) should think well of them; for custom makes whatever men are used to, seem the best, and the reverse of it the worst, all over the world.—

This applies to all who have left that society, as well as those who continue in it; but the latter have an additional reason for approving of those names. The use of a particular phraseology, has an effect similar to that of wearing a peculiar dress, or uniform, to keep up that *Esprit du corps*, which the leaders of religious, as well as of military associations, find so serviceable to their purposes. Thus the glaring dress and accoutrements of the soldiers, the coul and cassock of the monk, and the singular garb of the quaker, are all uniforms; and the peculiar phraseology adopted by each may be called a vocal uniform, having the same affect as uniforms of apparel, in tending to make them act more readily in a body, and to feel particular preference and regard for their own party, and their opinions and interests, to the exclusion of those of the rest of mankind.

The effects of peculiarity of dress in these respects, has long been known; but those of peculiarity of language have been but little noticed, if at all; but there are many reasons for supposing that the latter is in several respects equally potent with the former for the purposes mentioned, and in some, even a superior efficacy. B.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

SYMBOLS OF PYTHAGORAS.

(Continued from page 8, No. XXX.)

Της λαωφορευ μη βαδιζε.

Go not by the highway.

THE precept of “abstaining from beans,” is ascribed by the general voice of antiquity to Pythagoras, and enrolled among his symbols.—The tradition of his having given up his life to his base pursuers,